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**Testimony to the State of Ohio House Committee on Community and Family Advancement  
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Chairman Derickson, Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking member Howse, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on House Bill 294.

My name is Mimi Rivard, I have been a Nurse Practitioner since 1992 and I've been an RN since 1988. I've worked at the AIDS Resource Center (ARC) AIDS Resource Center for 2 years. Before that, I was at a medical center in the Bronx. At my job at the ARC, I work with patients that are HIV positive, including those who have been sexually assaulted.

On a personal note, I went to Planned Parenthood as teenager for birth control. I come from a working class background. I would not have become a nurse if I did not have Planned Parenthood.

I've worked in the Bronx and Boston, much larger cities than Columbus. It's unfortunate that there's not a needle exchange program here. HIV is preventable; it's idiotic to cut the funding. People need testing and treatment in medically underserved areas like Ohio, where there is widespread opiate addiction. These people need our help and they need our compassion.

I see patients with insurance and those without. It is poor public health policy to close testing centers as HIV spreads. Look to Indiana what happened in one rural Indiana community when Planned Parenthood was defunded.

My day to day work consists of primary care for HIV positive people. Most of my patients are young African American men, most don't have drug history, but our practice treats anyone who is HIV positive and anyone who does not want to become HIV positive. Many women I work with have contracted it from a male partner through sex work or a partner's infidelity or drug use.

Few older people are HIV positive. We're getting people on Truvada, a medication someone needs to take every day to reduce their likelihood of contracting HIV. We are diagnosing and treating STIs in the population. Our model is after San Francisco's attempts to cut down on the spread of HIV by engaging people in their care. We have mental health on site, pharmacy on site. We also work with the Ohio AIDS coalition.

Prevention is prevention. Treatment is prevention too. If you are cutting treatment you are increasing mortality and morbidity. Removing Planned Parenthood as an HIV testing grant recipient would be putting public health risk. If they don't know they are positive, it spreads.

We don't work directly with Planned Parenthood, but I know the good work they do. It's important to me personally because men and women I see and treat, who come from

diverse backgrounds, are people who are disenfranchised by their families. They need resources and support and education when they are young. There's no safety net if Planned Parenthood goes away. There would be a two tiered system- healthcare for people who are rich and those who are poor will go without. Women's health is for everyone. Planned Parenthood is a safety net. If you cut the safety net, people will die. It's about access to care. No where to get help like us anywhere else in Columbus.